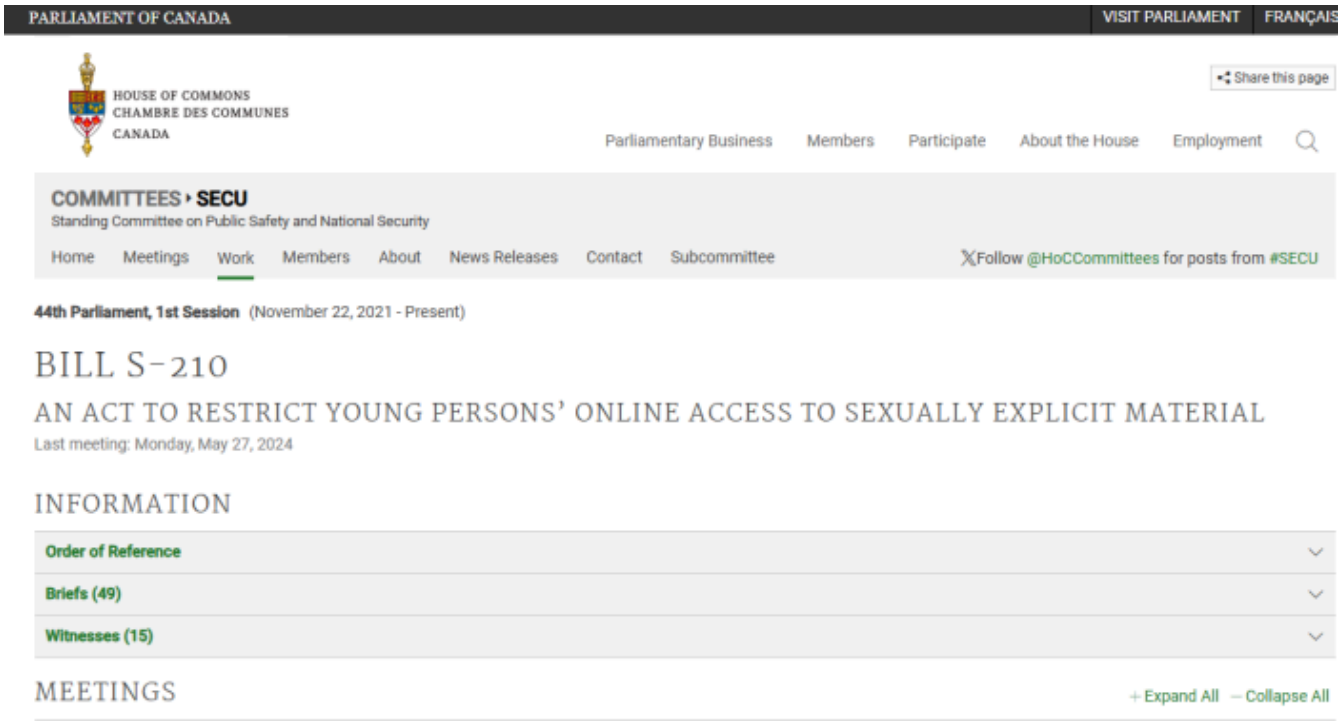
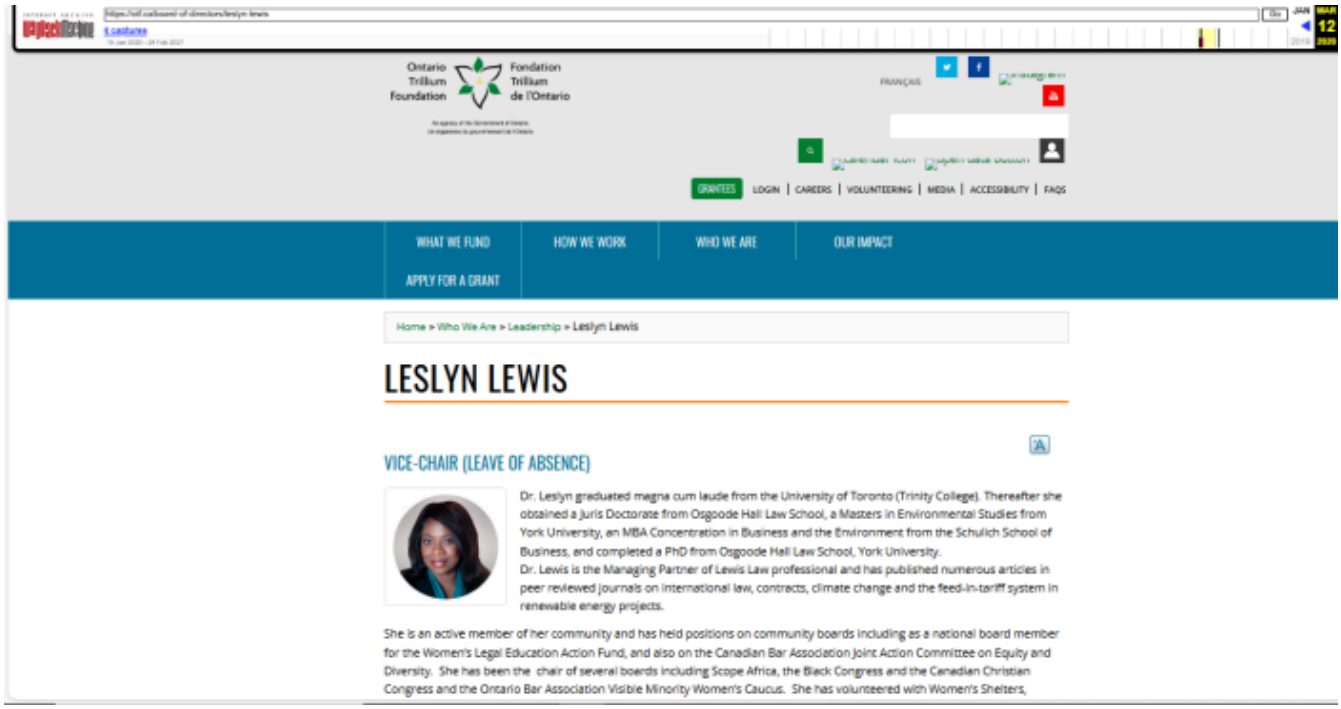
CANUCK LAW
Reporting That You're Not Getting Elsewhere (Do Your Own Research To Verify)

DECEMBER 14, 2024 BY RONNIE

Bill S-210: Age Restricting Pornography, Women's LEAF Opposed To It





Bill S-210 passed through the Senate in the Spring of 2023, and has yet to undergo Third Reading in the House of Commons, after the hearings concluded. It had been introduced by Senator Julie Miville-Dechêne of Quebec.

The Bill itself is titled: An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material. As the name implies, the substance is about age restricting access to pornography.

What's interesting about this Bill is some of the groups that work to oppose it, and all while claiming to fight for women's rights. One such organization is Women's LEAF, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund. Leslyn Lewis was once a National Board Member of it.

LEAF describes itself as:

> a national, charitable, non-profit organization that works towards ***ensuring the law guarantees substantive equality for all women, girls, trans, and non-binary people***. LEAF has developed expertise in the gendered and intersectional impact of technology-facilitated violence through intervening in landmark cases before the Supreme Court of Canada and making submissions to Parliament to highlight gender equity implications of online hate.

At the hearings before the House of Commons, LEAF made submissions, arguing *against* Bill S-210. The reasons are baffling.

In fairness, LEAF is hardly the only one to argue against Bill S-210. We'll get into some of the others as well in subsequent articles.

May 29, 2024

Heath MacDonald, Chair
Committee Members
Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
heath.macdonald@parl.gc.ca / SECU@parl.gc.ca

Dear MP MacDonald and Standing Committee Members:

Re: Concerns about negative impacts of Bill S-210

I am writing to you on behalf of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) with concerns regarding Bill S-210, "*An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material.*" Based on these concerns, we urge you **not** to pass Bill S-210. Instead, Parliamentarians should defer to the study of the proposed *Online Harms Act* contained in Bill C-63 to consider whether and how any age verification mechanisms should be integrated into Canadian law as a means to protect children online.

Rather than implement age-restriction specifically for obscene material, LEAF instead defers to the much broader Bill C-63. While decrying possible invasions of privacy, the group recommends something more expansive.

Preventing victims of technology-facilitated violence from taking safety measures

NCDII is one of the most prevalent forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. NCDII occurs when an individual's intimate or sexual images are circulated without their consent, often "with the purpose of shaming, stigmatizing or harming the victim."[3] Between 2015 to 2022, police received reports that the intimate images of over 1700 young people in Canada were distributed non-consensually, although the actual number of victims is estimated to be even higher.[4] 83% of the victims were girls.[5]

The amendments proposed by Bill S-210 would prevent victims of NCDII who are minors or who cannot otherwise use the age-verification technology from accessing webpages or platforms hosting their intimate images. The Bill's proposed measures would bar many victims from confirming if their image is posted, gathering evidence for legal recourse, and obtaining the URLs to make takedown requests.

Limiting marginalized communities' access to lawful online content

Acquiring and maintaining personal identification can be prohibitive for women, trans, and

******NCDII stands for non-consensual distribution of intimate images.***

LEAF also has a rather convoluted objection to age-verification, under the guise of victims' rights. While hundreds of *underage* people (mostly girls) have been victimized, requiring identification would make it harder for them to access their own images.

This means that LEAF is well aware of that the content of minors is often published, but age-verification can't be allowed in order to allow victims some recourse. *Perhaps a more stringent screening process beforehand would be helpful*.

LEAF also adds that "*To steer clear of such an inordinate penalty, tech companies are likely to over-moderate content on their sites. 2SLGBTQIA+ community members will bear the brunt of this change: through sexual content moderation, queer and trans content is already disproportionately targeted, banned, restricted, and demonetized on social media platforms*".

While denying that the "community" is full of groomers, LEAF argues that age-verification will disproportionately impact these people.

> Defence — legitimate purpose
> (2) No organization shall be convicted of an offence under section 5 if the act that is alleged

> to constitute the offence has a ***legitimate purpose related to science, medicine, education or the arts***.

Keep in mind, section 6(2) of Bill S-210 makes it clear that legitimate purposes related to: (a) science; (b) medicine; (c) education; or (d) "the arts" is a full defence. And "arts" is presumably a broad category. Nonetheless, LEAF still opposes age-verification.

DEPARTMENT/MINISTRY	YEAR	AMOUNT
Canadian Heritage (PCH), Court Challenges	2022	$25,000.00
Canadian Heritage (PCH), Court Challenges	2023	$54,475.05
Canadian Heritage (PCH), Court Challenges	2024	$54,475.05
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	2022	$8,911.00
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	2023	$8,400.00
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	2024	$8,400.00
Justice Canada (JC)	2023	$33,712.34
Justice Canada (JC)	2024	$33,712.34
Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)	2022	$362,668.00
Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)	2023	$364,183.53
Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)	2024	$364,183.53

This is just some of their more recent financing.

The Canadian Court Challenges Program is an initiative set up with public money in order for various "independent" groups to bring lawsuits challenging public policy. In other words, taxpayers have to finance lawfare against their own institutions.

For an idea of the kind of litigation that LEAF brings, check out some of their earlier work. It's not a stretch to describe them as anti-family, anti-woman, and anti-humanity.

Lately, LEAF has been using a lobbying firm called Counsel Public Affairs. Bridget Howe, Ben Parsons, Sheamus Murphy, and Laila Hawrylyshyn (all Liberals) have been making their

rounds. Counsel P.A. also employs Amber Ruddy, drug lobbyist and former CPC National Secretary.

Women's LEAF, like so many groups, is also significantly subsidized by taxpayers, across different Ministries. They then hire lobbyists to lean on politicians to implement their agendas. In other words, organizations like these are using public money to pressure politicians *against* implementing safeguards for what children view online.

You don't hate these people enough.

BILL S-210, (AGE RESTRICTING PORNOGRAPHY):
(1) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bills
(2) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bill/44-1/s-210
(3) https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/bill/S-210/third-reading
(4) https://sencanada.ca/en/senators/miville-dechene-julie/
(5) https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/SECU/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=12521982
(6) Women's LEAF Submission Against Implementing Bill S-210

BILL S-224, (HUMAN TRAFFICKING):
(1) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bills
(2) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bill/44-1/s-224
(3) https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/bill/S-224/third-reading
(4) https://sencanada.ca/en/senators/ataullahjan-salma/
(5) https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/JUST/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=12111640

Private Member Bills In Current Session:
(1) Bill C-206: Decriminalizing Self Maiming To Avoid Military Service
(2) Bill C-207: Creating The "Right" To Affordable Housing
(3) Bill C-219: Creating Environmental Bill Of Rights
(4) Bill C-226: Creating A Strategy For Environmental Racism/Justice
(5) Bill C-229: Banning Symbols Of Hate, Without Defining Them
(6) Bill C-235: Building Of A Green Economy In The Prairies
(7) Bill C-245: Entrenching Climate Change Into Canada Infrastructure Bank
(8) Bill C-250: Imposing Prison Time For Holocaust Denial
(9) Bill C-261: Red Flag Laws For "Hate Speech"
(10.1) Bill C-293: Domestic Implementation Of Int'l Pandemic Treaty

(10.2) Bill C-293: Concerns Raised In Hearings Over Food Supplies

(10.3) Bill C-293: Lobbying Interests Behind Nathaniel Erskine-Smith

(11) Bill C-312: Development Of National Renewable Energy Strategy

(12) Bill C-315: Amending CPPIB Act Over "Human, Labour, Environmental Rights"

(13) Bill C-367: Removing Religious Exemptions Protecting Against Antisemitism

(14) Bill C-373: Removing Religious Exemptions Protecting Against Antisemitism 2.0

(15) Bill C-388: Fast Tracking Weapons, Energy, Gas To Ukraine

(16) Bill C-390: Expanding Euthanasia Into PROVINCIAL Frameworks

(17) Bills C-398/C-399: Homeless Encampments, Immigration "Equity"

(18) Bill C-413: Prison Time Proposed For Residential School "Denialism"

(19) Bill S-215: Protecting Financial Stability Of Post-Secondary Institutions

(20) Bill S-243: Climate Related Finance Act, Banking Acts

(21) Bill S-248: Removing Final Consent For Euthanasia

(22) Bill S-257: Protecting Political Belief Or Activity As Human Rights

(23) Bill S-275: Adding "Sustainable And Equitable Prosperity" To Bank Of Canada Act

CRIMINAL, HUMAN RIGHTS, LAWFARE, LGBTQ, LOBBYING, NGO/CS, PORNOGRAPHY/PROSTITUTION, TRAFFICKING, SMUGGLING, CHILD EXPLOITATION

One Reply to "Bill S-210: Age Restricting Pornography, Women's LEAF Opposed To It"

Matthew Belair

MAY 13, 2020 AT 5:07 PM

http://www.itnj.org